643 Soon afterward he comes out and seats himself in the shade of a tree at the home of the Samandé Nabila [assistant to the Samandé Naba]. The doudissi are played ensemble, and the whole populace shouts joyfully.

The Ouidi Naba, the Tansoba, and all the other ministers and important personages come to present homage and to swear their fealty and submission. Each one makes a profession of loyalty.

In the evening, the new naba leaves the home of the Samandé Nabila and goes to spend the night at the home of the Ouagadougou Naba.

The next day he goes to Passepanga (from passé, "to increase, to add," and panga, "power, strength") where all other chiefs and descendants of Mogho Naba come to salute him.

At Passepanga the Mogho Naba sits under a tree with thousands of men right and left, all armed with rifles and aligned as for a session of rifle practice. They leave a kind of avenue in front of the new naba so that he is easily seen. Each [130] naba, with his retinue, comes to swear fealty and to make a profession of loyalty. The brothers of the new appointee, even those who were his rivals, come to make obeisance. The Mogho Naba then retires to the home of his gansoba (host) and sees to it that everyone has ample quantities of dam and that nissi (cows) are slaughtered for them.

The Mogho Naba remains at Passepanga for a week, and then he goes to Dimvoussé ("king's rest").

Finally, two or three years later, he chooses the place where he wishes to build his permanent residence.

Certain Names and Their Meaning

●551 When appointed, every chief loses his given name, and he is even forbidden to say it. He chooses a name for himself when he is appointed.

We shall now study some of these names and try to establish the moral precepts that go with them.

551 643 1. Mogho Naba Wobgo (Boukary was his real name). When Mogho Naba Sanum (literally, "gold") drove his brother Boukary from his territory, the latter took refuge at Bassawarga where he conquered the Gourounsi whom he enslaved, although later they became his sofa [guards or military retinue].

551 When Naba Sanum died, several candidates presented themselves to be named Mogho Naba.

Boukary also returned, accompanied by an impressive escort of Gourounsi armed with arrows, rifles, and clubs. He made gifts to the ministers, as all his [131] rivals were doing. However, seeing that the nomination of a successor to his late brother was being delayed, he one day remarked to the Ouidi Naba: "Designate anyone you wish for the throne, but I shall wrest it from him."

The evening of the day set for the nomination arrived (we have already noted that each candidate was put in a hut at the home of the Samandé Nabila), and the future Naba Wobgo assembled all his Gourounsi followers and addressed them more or less in these terms: "The new Mogho Naba is to be appointed tonight; when I go to the home of the Samandé Nabila you follow me, be armed, and surround the place. If by any chance I am not named, I shall say to you when I come out, 'Forward! Spare no one, not even the ministers, the other nabissi, or the new appointee.' "

That night, the Gourounsi, faithful to the commands of their chief, did as he had ordered.

While the ministers were discussing which of the nabissi should be named (of course, the future Naba Wobgo was automatically eliminated), the Larrhallé Naba came out to relieve himself. In the half-darkness he was astonished to see the men armed with arrows, rifles, and clubs. He reported these disquieting developments to the Ouidi Naba, who at once came out to see for himself. Everyone knew that only Boukary could organize such a plot. Fearing that they would otherwise all be murdered, they unanimously appointed him Mogho Naba.

When the time came for him to select the name that would be his until death, he said this: [132] "Kim missi laguem koabga kon bougouss'Wobgo (a hundred ghosts cannot frighten an elephant)." I am sure that here he was addressing his competitors. Then he added: "Ni Tiem Koudré Banghe pouiré taloug'pa salga (an old man who bequeaths his property wisely avoids strife)." Here he was addressing the ministers. He was aware that he was not liked, so he had prepared for war. The ministers had not wanted to name him and had done so only out of fear of being murdered.

551 643 2. Mogho Naba Kom (kom, "water"). When he was still quite young, Mogho Naba Kom, who is on the throne today, succeeded his father, Naba Siguiri, to the great surprise of his enemies. He took the name of Naba Kom.

(a) Kom sound Tambdo ti koulg'king lad moaghana. (During the rainy season when much water falls, the rivers and seas rejoice to see their water swell.)

(b) Neb san toul béogo bi a balem Wendé. (He who dreams of tomorrow must place his faith in God.)

(c) Sandib, laguem koabga ti pigh'pam nionré. Since he was very young at the time of his nomination, many begrudged him the appointment, and sorcery was used to cause his death. This third name means "A hundred charlatans, makers of charms, cannot prevail against the pigha (rock, i.e., the chief)."

(d) Gonpaniendégha kon nies niédga. (One does not [133] wipe one's bottom with thorns and brambles.) This alludes to his enemies and means that in spite of them he rules all the same.

(e) Tang'niebga belem mogré pamé wek'balbo. (Since the crocodile can only really live and procreate along the banks of watercourses, what is a mountain crocodile to do if he desires many offspring? He must move his dwelling and go to the water.)

551 645 3. The Ouidi Naba (actually named Rabi), Naba Boulga (literally, "well [pit]").

(a) Baning sorr'yoagba n'tilig kinsé la wamsé. (The large white or sorghum grown under the Strophanthus has no fear of being eaten by birds or monkeys.)

(b) Yel somd'boulgh'tont niédbo. (The well of righteousness cannot be filled.)

4. The Gounga Naba (actually named Namébrogo Ilboudo), Naba Yemdé (literally, "hippopotamus"). Yem deng kouilga ti zimbi datin dem yaré. ("When the hippopotamus is first to arrive at the waterhold, the fish can play about at will," or "when fish play around a hippopotamus, they will not be troubled by either big fish or fishermen.")

5. The Baloum Naba (Tenga Ouédraogo), Naba Tanga (literally, "mountain").

(a) "A mountain crowned with trees is soon noticed," or "in order to be respected, one must have good support, good backing."

551 645 [134] (b) Kata laghem koagb'kon sirigh tanga. (A hundred barking hyenas cannot shake a mountain.)

6. Kamsoro Naba (Ouene Nongué), Naba Niouga ("cat"). He is chief eunuch. Nioug'nok wendé na pa ne Sabelem. (A cat who trusts in God is sure to preserve his blackness.) In other words, one who is protected by the Mogho Naba, his "God," will never lack for anything; everything will come to him as if by magic.

551 643 835 7. Naba Gnighnemdo (Mogho Naba). Naba Oubri, the founder of the Ouagadougou dynasty, fell in love with one of his own daughters and had intercourse with her. The girl became pregnant and gave birth to a son. The wives of Naba Oubri wanted to put both the child and the mother to death. They asked the girl the name of the child's father, and she replied, "Ask my father, he ought to know." When Oubri was questioned, he answered: "Bassi yan ya mam lam gnighnemdo (Do nothing, this is my own flesh)."

The child of this incestuous union was thus named Gnighnemdo and later succeeded his relative, Naba Nasbiré.

The Placing of Statues at Loumbi-Raogo

211 306 532 Ganlougdou. In the old days, upon the death of a Mogho Naba or soon after, a jeweler was called in [135] to make a wax statuette, later to be cast in bronze, in the likeness of the late chief. The jeweler also made statuettes of one soroné, one napagha, one bendré, and one lounga, and all were deposited at the home [177] of the Loumbila Naba. This practice was suppressed upon the arrival of the French, and it appears that there is no statue of Naba Siguiri, father of Naba Kom, the present naba, at Loumbila.

The acting Mogho Naba is never supposed to see these statues, and the jeweler who made the likeness of his father must not see [135] them either. The jeweler was paid 100,000 cowries, a horse, a donkey, a cow, a wife, a large robe, and 1,000 kola nuts, and he was then sent away from Ouagadougou. He must never return and must never see the new Mogho Naba.

These gifts represented a considerable sum in the old days, even today for that matter. They were given to aid the jeweler in consulting seers and charlatans for the purpose of prolonging his life. Tradition has it that unless he followed faithfully the prescriptions given by the seers, he would die within a year after completing the statues.

[63] decision. These three personages thank the Ouidi Naba, and the Baloum Naba in turn goes back to his place, summons the Sogonékassanga (chief of the sogoné), and orders him to send for a reliable sogoné. The latter, accompanied by a Bilbalga (inhabitant of Bilbalogo, the section of the Baloum Naba), is sent to answer the call of the Ouidi Naba.

The Ouidi Naba says to them: "Yelé Nakomsé, Nabaoudba tib leb saourin (tell the naba candidates to come out into the sun), Laï soki Nabitienga diessé à ba sin nan ki a yela mé ti niondi kon and nam (and ask the Nabitienga which son or relative his father, before he died, designated to succeed him)." The Nabitienga replies: "Yamb yam m'ba ka niak ned [142] yé (act as you see fit; my father designated no one)."

Once more the Ouidi Naba sends a question: "Là ting ramb yé la me tib kon anda (which candidate was chosen by the inhabitants of the canton)?" The Nabitienga replies again: "Ting ramb ka niak ned tib kon yé (the inhabitants have no choice but yours)." When this reply is brought to the Ouidi Naba, he finally says: "Go now and invest the Nabitienga with full powers; he is the choice of the Mogho Naba (Toughin kon nabitieng'nam, ti Mog'Naba yella me tib kon nien)." Then the envoys snatch the sheepskin which the Nabitienga was wearing over his shoulder and turn in one corner of it. They bear him in triumph to the tom-boko (literally, "hole in the dust"), and the appointed naba is now acclaimed by the crowd. He is then taken successively before the Ouidi Naba, the Zusoaba, and the Baloum Naba. Finally he is led to the shelter in which stands the Bend' Naba (chief of all the drummers of the Mogho Naba), who salutes him to the sound of his drum.

[551] The Zabyouré (literally, "pseudonym"). This is the name adopted by each new chief. It replaces his real name which must not be uttered during the lifetime of the naba.

As he stands before the Band'Naba, the Nabitienga says: "Everyone has honored me, respected me, and the Mogho Naba has chosen me to succeed my father. I have no zabyouré, and I cannot, after all, get along without one." He then begins to enumerate some possible ones (for a study of these names, see [143] the special section above). Once all of these formalities are completed, the

event associated with it. We shall classify children under two headings: 1) ordinary children; 2) children especially sought.

The second category refers to children born after their parents have consulted the soothsayers, given alms and sacrifices, or employed other magical procedures.

Since the ordinary child is regarded as a spontaneous gift of God, his name is given by the father's close relatives unless some recent or remote event requires a name having particular significance.

Some examples of common ordinary names are Bila and Poko.

Names having special meanings are illustrated by the following examples.

Passektale (from passek, "insufficient," and talé, "resentment, hatred") means "I do not know what has caused the hatred which is felt for me."

Paratsida (from paraté, "to be unwilling," and sida, "truth") means "enemy of truth," a name intimating that people dislike the truth.

Dimpougoubnoma (literally, dima, "great chief, king"; pougbo, "to follow"; and noma, "profitable, good") is a name given to a child born of a mother given by a chief or one whose father has been given some important gift by a chief just before the child's birth.

[192] If a woman has no children after several years, the husband consults the soothsayers, makes offerings and sacrifices, employs charms, and finally resorts to the tinsé ([sing.] tinkougri, from tinga, "earth," and kougri, "stone") or to the tiga (fetish tree). The woman goes with her husband to the possessor of the god. They take a rooster and some cowries. After they explain the object of their visit, the rooster is killed by the priest, and if the offering is accepted, the couple is dismissed with a formal promise that their prayers will be answered.

If, in due course, the wife is delivered of a child, the baby must be named Tinga, and his brothers and sisters will be named Timbila, Timpoko, etc., or if the tiga was appealed to, the baby must be called Tiga, and his siblings, Tibila, Tipoko, etc.

It also happens that after successive births, the babies die. Since the Mossi, as we have noted, believe in reincarnation, they assume --

The Moslem Naba .

797 771 1. Virtually all of the inhabitants of Nobéré, Nobila, and Toécé (cantons in the present province of the Gounga Naba) are converts to Islam for reasons of personal convenience. They are the descendants of Naba Saga, twenty-second successor of Oubri.

2. The inhabitants of the villages of Doundoulma (descendants of Naba Kom, twenty-first successor of Oubri), Garpinné, and Kouila (descendants of Naba Doulgou or Roulgou, twenty-third successor of Oubri) are reputed to be devout Moslems. [211]

3. Kombissiri Naba Siguiri, circle of Ouagadougou.

4. Ramongo Naba Baongo, circle of Koudougou. Both of the above were descendants of Naba Warba nineteenth successor of Oubri, and were converted to Islam.

The present chiefs of these cantons are educated Moslems and possess mosques.

5. Sao Naba, a descendant of Naba Ouédraogo, circle of Ouagadougou, was converted nearly thirty years ago. His first teacher was a pilgrim returned from Mecca and a native of the village of Nakamtenga (near Kombissiri). He continued his study of the Koran under the direction of Sayenouné Bathily, a marabout originally from Kaédi (Mauretania) who was such a formidable thaumaturge that the local administration had to send him home in 1916. Sao Naba has a mosque, but it would appear that the Moslem religion has not diminished his animistic beliefs since he continues to make sacrifices to the manes and to drink beer from time to time (on customary feast days, for example).

6. Gourpila Naba (circle of Ouagadougou) is a former samand' biga of the present Mogho Naba and his conversion to Islam is recent, within the last six or seven years.

7. Boala Naba (circle of Ouagadougou) is a devout Moslem.

8. Gaongo Naba (circle of Ouagadougou) is also a devout Moslem. [212]

[551 771] In conclusion let us point out that the present emperor continues the tradition of giving Moslem names to his children and has several of his sons in Koranic schools. There is no doubt that more of his children are being educated in these schools than in the official primary school. [213]

304 a boy [264] during the circumcision process is considerable for his family, the latter will not agree to it unless they have had a good harvest.

Besides, since the affair must be quite grandiose in character, thirty to fifty boys from the ages of twelve to fifteen must be ready before permission will be given for the operation. After the relatives have consulted the soothsayers (bagba), they seek out a Yarga (Dioula of Mandé origin) or a Silmimoaga (the Toucouleur [Tukolor] of Mossi country) and ask him to perform the operation.

This surgeon for the occasion is called gounni.

Kéogo. A site is selected where there are no habitations, preferably a sandy area. A circle is laid out and walled with Mossi secco (sogsak' pinri). The size of the enclosure, the keogo, is governed by the number of boys who are going to live in it.

The boys are brought to the gate of the kéogo, which is strictly guarded by zoumsi (men who have already been circumcised). Each boy assumes a serious and defiant manner to give himself courage. Inside the circle there is a milling crowd, and there is such a noise of drums and songs that the following ritual sentence is barely audible: "Moaga wanian konlebin kouli moaga (You came in a Moaga -- here meaning an uncircumcised man -- you will not be a Moaga when you go out)."

The operation. Before the boys are brought in, a hole has been [265] dug for each one. The child is blindfolded and made to sit on a stone in front of the hole. The prepuce, stretched out as far as possible and tied with a string, is placed on a block of wood and cut off with a single slash of a razor (barga). The penis is held up with a split reed to permit the blood to flow into the hole. I believe that there is a special hole into which all the severed prepuces are thrown. A string tied around the boy's hips replaces the reed after the operation to keep the penis away from the body and thus avoid painful rubbing.

304 551 Bankoensé yuiya (names given to circumcised boys). The names vary according to the rank of each boy. The first to be operated upon is called Falinga; the second, Ouanda; the third,

304 Wanzouri; and so on through Nodo, Koulwandé, Wemba, etc.
551 There is even the favorite who is called Ponsom because he is given special privileges.

Zouinsi yuiya (names of the guards of the kéogo and of those
304 who watch over the bankoensé). Seven days after the ceremony some of the zouinsi are chosen to supervise the kéogo, to take care of its organization and to arrange the games. A real hierarchy is involved, beginning with the Soré Naba ("chief of the path"), who is, so to speak, the head of the establishment, and proceeding down in order of [266] precedence through Sobila Naba, Dag'noré, and Dag'Nobila (gatekeepers). The role of the latter is to allow any zounga [singular of zouinsi] to re-enter the enclosure while preventing any of the circumcised boys from leaving the enclosure without their permission. The Galli and Gallibila are in charge of the drums. The Imam and the Imambilla ("chiefs of pardon") protect the bankoensé from ill-treatment by the zouinsi. Then there is Banzambo, a comic character who is always performing all sorts of dances to relieve the monotony of life in the kéogo and give the boys a little fun. His gyrations always amuse the company. The duty of two characters called Wagdré, "chief thief," and Wagd'billa, "little thief," is to steal the meat acquired by the newly circumcised boys during forays or the saghbo brought by the boys' parents. They compensate for their mischief, however, by putting the younger children to bed and feeding them when the games go on too long. They do this in spite of the vigilance of the guards.

The Nané and Nanebilla, along with the Bankoé, are the masters of ceremonies.

Support of the circumcised boys. As we have already pointed out, the relatives of the boys are expected to provide them with morning and evening meals during their recovery. Actually, the boys get very meager rations since more than half of the food -- after the choicest bits have been set aside by the lembré (person in charge of tasting the food)-- is reserved [267] for the many zouinsi. Since most of them are bachelors, they welcome a chance to eat their fill.

304 Care given the sick boys. A specially arranged corner of the
752 kéogo serves as an infirmary. Treatment consists of washing the

622 539 Sen damma nyébra, baryoro nan wa. If someone attempts to kill the crocodile, the serpent appears immediately. (1)

1. That is, to say, if someone threatens the new naba, the province chief will come to his aid.

622 On the third day the new naba is shaved. His sister, or in her absence an old woman, begins the procedure, but anyone may complete it. Everybody then goes to the naba: the chosen man is to receive a name, and from now on it will be forbidden to call him by his previous name. Each naba receives three names, or rather three mottoes, chosen by his sister or by an old woman of the family. These mottoes allude to a historical event or to the chosen man's position. When everyone has arrived at the naba's house, the man's sister discloses the mottoes to the naba, who proclaims them, and the drums in turn repeat them to the people. Then the dancing, singing, and drinking are resumed. On the following day the new naba, duly invested, returns to his village to take up his duties.

[55]

622 539 Here are some of the mottoes:

I. The mottoes of the naba of Koupéla allude to the war which took place at the time of his father's appointment between the latter, Naba Ibri, and the people of Kazem'bouanga:

1. Wadra yerda né kyougou. Wadra gousa menga, t'a péleum ka yd kyougou. The star glows in spite of the moon. But it should beware, for its brilliance does not obliterate that of the moon. (The star stands for the Kazem'bouanga pretender. The moon is the naba of Koupéla.)

2. Kalébdo kanenga, la son boulwaka. Kalebodo sauce is not good, but it is better than boulwaka sauce. (The naba of Koupéla is not very powerful, but he is more powerful than the people of Kazem'bouanga.)

3. Néda gwanga nan samma. The lame man claims that he will kill him. (The pretender, the lame man, intends to kill the naba of Koupéla.)

II. The mottoes of the Saman'Naba, prime minister of Koupéla, allude to his position vis-à-vis the naba, to whom he owes everything and who supports him:

533 their praises and beating fiercely on their drums in the hope of receiving a few cowries, kola nuts, or at least some beer.

326 306 The smiths (saba), by which is meant those who work with iron, extract the metal from the ore and make it into hoes and hatchets. They sometimes work with wood, as in other parts of the Sudan, but usually this industry is carried out by members of another guild. The jewellers make bracelets, file teeth, repair worn hoes, etc. They are not smiths, properly speaking, and anyone may exercise their trade.

767 The undertakers (lada) offer gifts to the spirits of the deceased on the day of death or its anniversary (kouré). They also lay the corpse in the grave, and if death was due to illness, it is impossible to proceed with the burial without them. But anyone may dig the grave and carry the corpse. We shall discuss the undertakers again when funerals are described.

Chapter 2. The Family

596 The structure of the Roman family and the power granted to the paterfamilias, its very foundation, have been greatly and justly admired. Something like the paterfamilias is to be found among the Mossi. Would that we also found the Roman matron! As we have seen above, every Mossi is subject to the Moro Naba, a province chief, a canton chief, and a village chief. He is also subject in a more immediate sense to the head of his family, and he can do nothing without his consent. If he wishes to marry, he consults the family head, in whose household his bride will lodge when she arrives in the village. On the other hand, the man who wishes to give his daughter in marriage never does so without consulting his family head, at whose house the girl will stay before she goes to live with her husband.

[551] The family is thus very tightly organized among the Mossi. Each family has a name which is seldom used; if one of its members was ever naba, the name derives from that of the first naba. Members of [582] the same family may not intermarry, and usually they all have the [784] same kisgou (prohibition), whether the term designates a totem, a taboo, or something else altogether. The head of the family is its oldest member. Upon his death, the authority is transferred not to his

852 553 Three days after the birth of a male child, or four days in the case of a daughter, the father and mother invite the relatives to come and rejoice over the new addition to the family. On that day the baby's forehead is shaved in a circle, and he is given a name. The husband's sisters or his other wives choose a name for the first child, and the father himself chooses the names of the others.

551 The name is derived from an event which preceded, attended, or followed the birth. If the mother ever happened to kill a chicken, even by mistake, even in her childhood, her first child is called by the generic name for chickens (noara), or else he will die. If the father or mother have seen two snakes in the same spot, the child will bear the name Ganda. If several previous children died, the newborn takes the name Yéwaya, "he has come." If several reasons for specific names concur, for instance, if he should be named Noara, Ganda, Yéwaya, he is called Ywawa, "one with many names." A child often bears the name of an older sibling with the addition of the adjective Bila, "little, younger." Thus, if the older child is called Tibo, the younger one is called Tibila (Tibo Bila, "the little Tibo fetish"). In other words, names are not given haphazardly. Some names are rather pretty: Zuényendé, "he is shy"; Nongabamba, "she loves them (her parents)"; Danimmamyé, "forget me not." Sometimes the name merely indicates the child's sex: Daore, "male"; Poko, "female"; or else the festive occasion or day of the week when the child was born.

304 Just as names are not given haphazardly, tattoo ings do not vary without reason. The native tattooing consists basically of three parallel lines on each side of the face, running vertically across the cheek from the temples to the chin, with a fourth line leading from the nose perpendicularly to the other three and crossing the cheek horizontal hatching between them, like a ladder; this is the mark of free men and of chiefs' sons. The three vertical lines may also be interrupted halfway down the cheek by three horizontal stripes, and then continue down to the chin; this is the mark of a child who was born [844] among the Peul because his older siblings had died and the sorcerer had decreed that his mother should give birth among the Peul. This [197] tattooing is characteristic of a distinct Mossi tribe, which lives among them but speaks a different language—the Marensé, better known as Marka. If a child has a Yarga /Yarse/ mother or grandmother, he will bear one horizontal stripe on the right cheek in addition to the three vertical lines /on each cheek/; this is the Yarsé tattooing.

304 day the one in charge of the circumcision, a wealthy Yarga or Mossi
563 who has the means to feed several of the people to be circumcised,
852 chooses a tree to serve as shelter for the operation. Rain need not be taken into account, for circumcision is always performed during the dry season from December to April, when agricultural work is at a
[778] standstill. The tree is surrounded with straw mats, forming the t6oo or sacred enclosure which no one who is not circumcised may come near without running the risk of being insulted and often beaten; if he should dare to step inside it, he would be stricken by the greatest misfortunes. The Peul sets out a flat stone, sacrifices a chicken in order to make the spirit of the tree benevolent toward those to be circumcised, and operates on the boys one by one. Drums are played throughout the operation to drown the cries of the victims.

852 For three days afterwards the newly circumcised boys do nothing. They rest and tend their wounds. They remain isolated from the rest
[535] of the community for two or three months, sometimes even longer. Judging by the dances which close the festivities, dancing must be their primary concern during that period of time. They also thresh the millet of those who invite them to do so, but no uncircumcised person may join them, no uninitiated individual may come near them.
[198] They do not speak the Mossi language at this time, but a special tongue of which they learn enough to serve them in their everyday needs. Woe to those who forget and use their native tongue; they are
● [551] beaten with switches made of a kind of willow. Even their names are changed, and no one may call them by their Mossi names.

The circumcised boys are divided in two groups, one "male" and one "female." One of the groups bears the name of the hyena (kwara in their language) and the other is called masalro, whose French equivalent we do not know. The hyena group must strain their wits to snatch food, even from the other circumcised boys, who are kept constantly on the alert. The other group makes improper gestures during the dance.

852 The circumcised boys are covered with gray dust to alter their
293 appearance completely. A tail is fastened to the back of their breech-
776 cloth, hanging to the ground. It is made of plaited cotton thread and
481 ends in a pompon. Its function is to drive off the kikirsi spirits, who apparently do not like circumcised persons. The boys walk bent over and leaning on sticks like old men. This is done to test their obedience and to see if they listen carefully to what they are told.

776 other hand, the kikirsi do not drink fermented millet beer, but they must be offered some before the yeast (da'nodo) is added. They have their preferences like human beings. They know hatred and jealousy, and sometimes they even kill one another. They are said to have two 776 sexes, to marry, and to procreate. They even have the special faculty 845 of always bearing twins, and this is why twins are called by their 551 name and are dedicated to them; it is believed that spirits dwell within them.

776 The birth of twins causes their mother much trouble. Formerly 845 both were sometimes put to death, while at other times only one was killed. When a woman bears twins, she builds at the door of her hut 782 a tiny miniature house where the spirits dwelling /82/ within her children will take shelter. Three times a year if her means allow it, in the spring, in the winter, and at the height of the rainy season, or at least once a year, a guinea hen must be offered to the kikirsi. This fowl is sacrificed exclusively to them. On that day they must also be offered their favorite foods, and this means that honey, sesame, and millet cakes must be purchased, that beer must be prepared and a jar saved without yeast, that millet mush has to be cooked, and especially that no pepper be added to the sauce. Otherwise the husband, [753] wife, or children will be afflicted with a dreadful eye disease, for such is the illness which the kikirsi have the power of visiting on human beings.

776 As children, twins may wear only the kankabra, a garment made 845 of black and whitish threads, the characteristic clothing of the kikirsi. Happily, they are later allowed to dress as they please. If the mother dies, the twins offer the sacrifices themselves and build the small hut that serves as a dwelling for their little spirit. The later born twin is considered the older of the two. They both wear the same bracelet and share everything given to them. It is not considered proper to make a gift to one without giving the same thing to the other. Actually, these customs are to be found in Africa from Bambara country to Tanganyika.

776 To return to the kikirsi themselves, they are present everywhere. In the bush they are fond of termite nests, large and small. They 241 also like open spaces. They are to be found around the villages; there are ponds set apart for the kikirsi, wells considered to belong to them. There are spirits watching over every field, and before sowing, as also before harvesting millet, the master of the field sacrifices a chicken to the spirit on a stone in the middle of the field. The

844 the child is washed in warm water and then placed on a mat in a sort of nest made with old skirt cloths and various bits of fabric. Then the woman is placed on the mat next to the child which can now be suckled. Let us note, however, one final ceremony. Before the
844 woman gives the breast, the child is washed in dolo, especially the
853 inside /253/ of the nose and the genitalia, for the Mossi, like the
826 Bambara, are convinced that mother's milk has an injurious effect on these two parts of a child's anatomy. If the child, while suckling, should breathe in some milk through its nose, this would, it is said, cause the interior of the organ to rot. Likewise, were a few drops to fall on its genitalia, that part would suffer from it. The dolo prevents such lamentable accidents.

846 At the end of three days, the woman leaves the compound and goes to pay a call on the old women who helped her and to thank them. After two weeks or a month, she takes up her usual tasks.

854 The Mossi and Foulsé women of Yatenga carry their children on the back after the fashion of other Sudanese women, holding them in a skirt cloth which they tie and knot up in front over the breasts.

851 Baptism. —No celebration takes place at birth: The child is bap-
553 tized about a month later. One of the older members of the family, other than the mother and father, chooses the name. In selecting it, the sponsor takes some event into account, whether important or unimportant, which occurred during the mother's pregnancy. If she was frightened by a horse, the child is named Oueyfo. If, by accident, she crushed a chicken to death, the newborn is called Noga. If a sacrifice was made for the expected child on a hill, he is named Tenga; if the sacrifice was made to a bastard mahogany tree, the child is called Kouka, etc.

● 551 Let us note that most Mossi proper names, male or female, are the names of vegetables, trees, animals, etc., that is, precisely those names with which an attempt was made to replace the traditional proper names in France in 1793.

Curiously enough, there are no family names. When one wants to pinpoint someone's individuality, one says, "So-and-So (here, the proper name), son of So-and-So (here, the father's proper name)." If there are two men with the same name in one compound, an agnomen will be used to distinguish them, for example, "Tenga the Big and Tenga the Small." As for the Mossi sondogo (pl., sondéré), which is the same as the Bambara diamou, this is a clan name (we shall return

●551 to the clan later) and not a family name. Ouidiraogo, for example, which is the most widespread clan name among the Mossi, is common to innumerable families.

As for the personal name, proper to the individual, it is quite changeable and variable, for often an individual does not answer to a single name but to two or three: the name his sponsor gave him, the name his mother gives him, the name given him by his friends, and the name given him by his neighbors. On the one hand, the Black likes to conceal his name, while on the other hand he changes it or seems to change it with the greatest ease. We have already seen /in a section not translated/ that the Moro Naba, when ascending the throne, change their proper name to an official name, and from that day forward the former name may never be pronounced. The Mossi who enlist as riflemen (and this is true of all Sudanese men) tend never to sign up under their real name /254/, and this has nothing to do with thoughts of desertion. They give the name of their village or that of their tribe or of a neighboring tribe, or just any name they please. In a word, one cannot look for the same conception of names among the Blacks as is found among Europeans. The European has a name (proper name, family name), and that is the end of it. He is listed, labeled, classified. He cannot do away with it. His name is one with him. The Black is too primitive to have reached this kind of social discipline. He conceals his true personality under the changing names to which he does not want to be linked.

To summarize, the Mossi and Foulsé of Yatenga have (1) a personal name, a first name or proper name as we say in French, along with a certain number of names or agnomina which are used in addition. (2) One says, "So-and-So, son of So-and-So," when wishing to designate someone without confusing him with another person who carries the same name. These two designations provide the proper name and the father's name, but not, properly speaking, the family name. As we already know, the family extends well beyond the household. (3) Although no family names exist, there is the name of the clan, which in turn extends far beyond the family. There is, therefore, both more and less than a family name, but no exact equivalent to it.

845 Freaks. ~~Twins.~~ —Abnormal children frighten the Mossi. Their
847 mothers do not suckle them and thus condemn them to a speedy death. Children born of incest are put to death.

881 304 It seems that among the Mossi and Foulsé, the nané does not give moral lessons to the bankonsé, contrary to the procedure among the Bambara where the custom has been preserved.

At the end of a month, the bankonsé are healed. The families are notified, and each household prepares a new pair of breeches and a boubou /robe/ for the young circumcised boys.

On the evening preceding the day when they make their reappearance in the village, around seven o'clock, the skirts of the circumcised boys are heaped into a pile and burned. The following morning the nané leads the bankonsé to the well to wash from head to toe before donning their new clothes. Before leaving camp, the firewood gathered by the boys is distributed among their mothers and the straw among their family heads. The nané also keeps a certain amount for himself. This is his allowance, aside from his being provided with food throughout the month, along with the circumcised boys, by the latter's relatives. (On the other hand, he had to remain separated from his [833] wife, for there is a superstition that should he approach her, the bankonsé would fail to heal.) When the distribution of straw and firewood has been completed, our circumcised boys make their triumphal entry into the village at seven o'clock in the morning in their /261/ beautiful new garments. To the sound of the tom-tom, they visit all the compounds, calling on everyone. Gifts are offered to them [431] (kola nuts, cowries, peanuts, cotton, dolo, etc.). When the visits are completed, the celebration is over, and the bankonsé return home. [551] They may henceforth be called by name again; this could not be done during their retreat.

Excision. ——Girls are excised when they are eight, nine, or ten, depending on how mature they are. As with the boys, this is done during the month of December, but instead of being carried out on a village or quarter basis, it is done on a compound basis. The operation itself is performed by an old woman who knows how to do it. It is not she, however, who watches over the girls afterwards, but an old woman of the compound who has them under her supervision for twenty-five or thirty days. During that time, the girls are kept apart, sleeping in their guardian's hut and taking care of themselves. As soon as they can walk, they go and gather wood in the bush for her, they fetch water, spin cotton, etc. At nightfall, they sing in chorus, clapping their hands in rhythm.

When they are healed, they deck themselves with all the bracelets and jewelry they can find in the compound. Thus dressed up and

8: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1958
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he received from them. This unequal exchange, plus the nobles' prerogative of seizing the wives of pagans, contributed to the increase of the Moslems.

The conversion of Mossi to Islam is sometimes accompanied by a rupture in the relationships between persons involved in "friendships" with a view of obtaining wives. A great quarrel developed in the district between a pagan chief and a recent convert who refused to give the chief a daughter promised as a wife. The chief became furious and claimed that the Moslem had broken a promise made years ago, but the Moslem claimed that it was against his new religion to give his daughter to a pagan. It is not true that Moslems in the village do not exchange wives with pagans, but the Moslems often try to convert their pagan friends so that the brides will not have to revert to paganism. The chief's difficulty was that he could not become a Moslem because of his ritual and ceremonial relationship with the ancestors. The Moslem men do not have such difficulties with their pagan wives because most women follow their husbands' dictates in religious and other matters. Many Moslem men attempt to prevent their wives from having sacrifices made to the ancestors, but if a woman really wishes such a sacrifice she can easily have it arranged through her pagan relatives. If a woman married to a Moslem refuses to observe Islamic practices, she is liable to divorce and runs the risk of having her children taken away.

Mossi anxiety over children is often instrumental in converting them to Islam. When a woman is barren or her young children die, she consults a soothsayer (*barga*). She is either told that her Tengkougre benefactor was not amply rewarded and recalled the children, or that her "Moslem" children (children who wished to be Moslems) were angry because they were given pagan names. In the latter case she is advised to make a gift to a Moslem and to ask her husband to build a Moslem prayer-circle outside his hut so that when her children "return" (are born again) they will see it. Finally, she is advised to give all her children Moslem names. I could discover no reason why the pagan soothsayers advise these anxious parents to adopt Islam, except that they hope that complicated prescriptions will be more efficacious. Nevertheless, so effective is this technique for gaining converts to Islam that even members of the family of the chief pagan priest are not immune to it. Furthermore, once a woman has a Moslem child, all her other children must be Moslems or they will die. A man whose children are all Moslem has no recourse except to adopt Islam if he wants a funeral, because his Moslem sons may not give him a pagan funeral.

Every Mossi, whether Moslem or non-Moslem, wishes a proper funeral, and now that travel has increased the fact of being Moslem or pagan is of great importance. Many young migrants to Ashanti have reported that their dead pagan comrades were unceremoniously disposed of, while the local Christians and Moslems took care of their dead coreligionists. But despite this fact, and the belief of administrators and missionaries, I found no evidence that the seasonal and other migration of Mossi youth to Ghana and the Ivory Coast have contributed very much to the spread of Islam. It is true that some of the thou-

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
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175 643 669 645 knew that Boukary Koutou was the only person capable of such a conspiracy. Fearing for their lives if they did not nominate him, they immediately sent a messenger to summon him as the successful candidate.[14] Under normal circumstances, however, there was no coercion of the ministers and the nominee was quietly brought to the councillors.

645 643 [292] Wearing a pair of trousers and a sheepskin mantle and carrying a spear in each hand, the nominee entered the courtyard of the compound through the women's door.[15] He was preceded by the Samande. Nabila, who sprinkled the earth with water. He came up to the councillors and saluted them, and the Ouidi Naba addressed him as follows: "Before your father [brother] died, did he designate you to be his successor?" The nominee replied, "No, Sire! My father has left you free to choose whom you wish, be he a blind man or a leper!" This question was asked three times, and the nominee responded three times. The Ouidi Naba then made the following declaration: "I am giving you the nam of your father and grandfathers. You must try to conduct yourself as they did when they had the nam." 645 643 551 The Ouidi Naba then listed the names of the territories over which the ruler had absolute power and authority. The new monarch raised his two spears in the air, made a speech in which he announced three guiding principles by which he vowed to reign, and "named a name," that is, suggested the title by which he wished to be known. For example, Mogho Naba Sagha II (1942–57) said in his inaugural speech: "Without rain, there is no life. I will be like rain for the country." He then became known as Mogho Naba Sagha ("Rain"), a rather fitting title for a ruler in a country with uncertain rainfall. The present Mogho Naba stressed in his inaugural speech (in 1957) that he was "solid as a rock." His official title is now Mogho Naba Kougri ("Rock").[17]

645 643 The taking of a new name was only the first step in the elaborate process through which a man became Mogho Naba. Next, the Ouidi Naba took the two spears from the new monarch and removed his sheepskin mantle. Then he gave him his new white clothes, which included a pair of trousers, a bonnet, and a sleeveless robe, all made for him by the people of the Sculougou ward in the capital. Next, he was given a cushion made by the people of Baramimi. The Baloum Naba then took the closely [789] guarded namtibo, the sacred amulets of the dynasty, and used them in the [782] preparation of a potion of millet beer mixed with millet-flour water, part [776] of which was poured as a libation to the earth goddess, Tenga.[18] The ruler and the assembled ministers all partook of the potion in a kind of communion. The ministers then shook the ruler's hand, an act thereafter forbidden, and departed for their own compounds. The newly elected

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
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The newly elected monarch secreted himself either at the Samande Nabila's home or elsewhere in the capital until daybreak. Tradition holds that if he were killed before being officially proclaimed before his subjects as the new ruler, the assassin could become Mogho Naba.[19]

The public ceremonies marking the official proclamation of the new ruler's accession to power took place on the following day. Early that morning, the monarch left his secret sleeping quarters and proceeded to the Koumbi Naba's house. Here he dressed in his white garments and mounted an old, unsaddled horse. The Baloum Naba then gave him a sack containing the namtibo, which he placed over his shoulder, and the Kaizi Naba led him out of the courtyard by the women's door. As the ruler's horse passed through the gate, his sister, the *Napoko* ("female ruler"), cried, "The sun has reappeared! The fire is relighted! The earth lives again!" A large crowd of musicians and warriors who had been alerted by the ministers shouted and danced as they accompanied the monarch, who circled the compound three times.[20] The ruler then reentered the compound, and this time he came out through the men's door as a sign of his full status. Here he was greeted by the Ouidi Naba, who proclaimed in a loud voice, "Mossi people, here is the Mogho Naba!" The warriors shouted and fired their muskets, and the musicians played. Then all the dignitaries and their followers solemnly prostrated themselves and paid homage and swore allegiance to their monarch. He, in turn, listened attentively when his ministers and some of the elder chiefs gave him advice about how the affairs of state should be conducted. After each declaration of loyalty or word of counsel, the people shouted in praise of their ruler. The Bendere Naba, accompanied by his musicians, then recited the ruler's genealogy, announced the pledges the new monarch had made to his people, and acclaimed him by his royal title, "Mogho Naba [X]." From this moment on, no child born during his reign could bear the ruler's name, and those persons who already bore it called themselves *Nab'yure* ("king's name").

As the next stage in the ceremony the Mogho Naba, accompanied by his retinue, visited the various wards in the capital. In each he was proclaimed ruler and received the allegiance of both Mossi and non-Mossi ward chiefs. He visited the wards controlled by such men as the Loumbila Naba, the Sapone Naba, and the Ouagadougou Naba, and at each stop the ward chief declared, "People of [X], here is your new sovereign." Having been acknowledged by the leading chiefs of the capital, the new ruler then returned to his host's house. He emerged later in the day to visit the compound of a palace attendant, the Samande Nabila, where he sat under a

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
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The entire assembly saluted the district chief, and the official declared the reason for his visit. Then the district chief sent a page for a chief's bonnet, which he gave to a samande. This youth took the bonnet, came up to the kneeling candidates, and jokingly attempted to place it on the head of each one in turn while asking, "Whom did the *keema* ["dead person"; in this case, the dead chief] say should be chief?" When no one answered he gave up the game, ran to the successful candidate, and placed the bonnet on his head. As soon as this happened, all the unsuccessful candidates and men of the lineage ran away, followed by other samande-kamba, who waved big clubs and feigned violence if they should catch them. The men of the lineage soon returned while the new chief did homage and pledged allegiance to the Kombere Naba by prostrating himself on the ground and by putting sand from the tomboko on his head. By this act the Tenga Naba became the district chief's subordinate and the lowest elected official in a ruling hierarchy that extended from the Mogho Naba down to the least village chief.

Once the oath-taking ceremony was over, the new chief's followers saluted the district chief, lifted their new leader onto their shoulders, and bore him triumphantly back to his village, shouting for joy. Here, in imitation of his superiors, the new chief made a speech in which he ridiculed his competitors, reviewed his background, and made known his chiefly intentions. Here, too, the people seized upon some significant point in his speech as an indication of the name "he had named." However, this name was seldom used, since people referred to him as the Naba of such-and-such village, e.g., Barkago Naba, and addressed him simply as "Naba." The village Tengsoba then performed propitiatory sacrifices to the Ninisi ancestors and to the local earth deity in the chief's name, and "gave him back the village" of which he had been the temporary caretaker. Only after these rites had been performed could the chief assume command of the village without incurring supernatural sanctions of the ancient Ninisi.

The typical village chief had no court. His compound was only slightly larger than that of a village family. He had no officials, but some of his companions who assumed special duties similar to those of the Ouidi Naba and the Tansoba were sometimes jokingly referred to by these honorific titles. The village chief had neither soghondamba nor samande-kamba, and he permitted his wives to serve refreshments to his visitors. In general, everything was on a smaller scale than on the district level, including all ceremonies even to the burial of the village chief.

12:Skinner E-4,5 (1955-1957) 1962
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When a woman has a number of stillbirths or
845 loses her children when they are still babies, however, it is believed
761 than these children were embodiments of the same *kinkirsi* (spirits)
776 who must be tricked into remaining on earth when it returns, and
443 the market place is chosen as the site for this trickery. As soon as such
851 a woman gives birth to a child, and old woman places it in a basket
443 and on the next market day takes it to the market place. Her intention is to "sell" the child in the hope that it would not die if owned by someone other than its mother. The old woman walks around the market place shouting: "I have something to sell!" Invariably a man will walk up to her, and after ascertaining the contents of the basket, offer to buy it. The price varies with the fortune of the man, but traditionally the amount paid has been 500 cowries or their equivalent. The man takes the child for a few minutes and then returns it to its vendor, telling her in a loud voice so that the kinkirsi will hear: "I would like you to give this child to 'X' (the child's mother) to be reared for me and I will pay for its upbringing and will come
[551] for the child in a few years. He then gives the child the name *Yamba*
[563] (slave), or *Yemdaogo* (male slave) if male and *Yempoko* (female slave) if a girl. The old woman then returns the child to its mother, relating what has passed in the market and indicating who the "owner" of her child is. The "owner" of the child may not even see the child again, and naturally does not take this ownership seriously. In many cases the money with which he bought the child was given to him by the child's father.

852 The market also plays an important part in the circumcision and
443 incision ceremonies of Mossi boys and girls. For about two to three months after the actual operations the young children, especially the boys are secluded in the circumcision lodges or compounds and have almost no contact with the village population. Their re-introduction to society always takes place on the great market day. The parents of the children buy new clothing for them this occasion, and on the appointed day the boys or girls parade together in the market and are offered gifts by the market people. Later in the day, they are dismissed and individually feted by their relatives.

585 Owing to the relatively unceremonious nature of Mossi marriages,
78 the market does not play a role in Mossi weddings. However, the
554 same thing cannot be said about the last important *rite de passage*,
443 especially the funeral of a chief, or important elder. Prior to the intervention of the French, and to a lesser extent even today, the announcement of the death of an important ruler was seen as the breakdown of law and order and was ritually dramatized by a popular raid
[565] on the markets throughout the territories (Skinner : ms). During the interregnum the vendors are subject to constant raids by members of